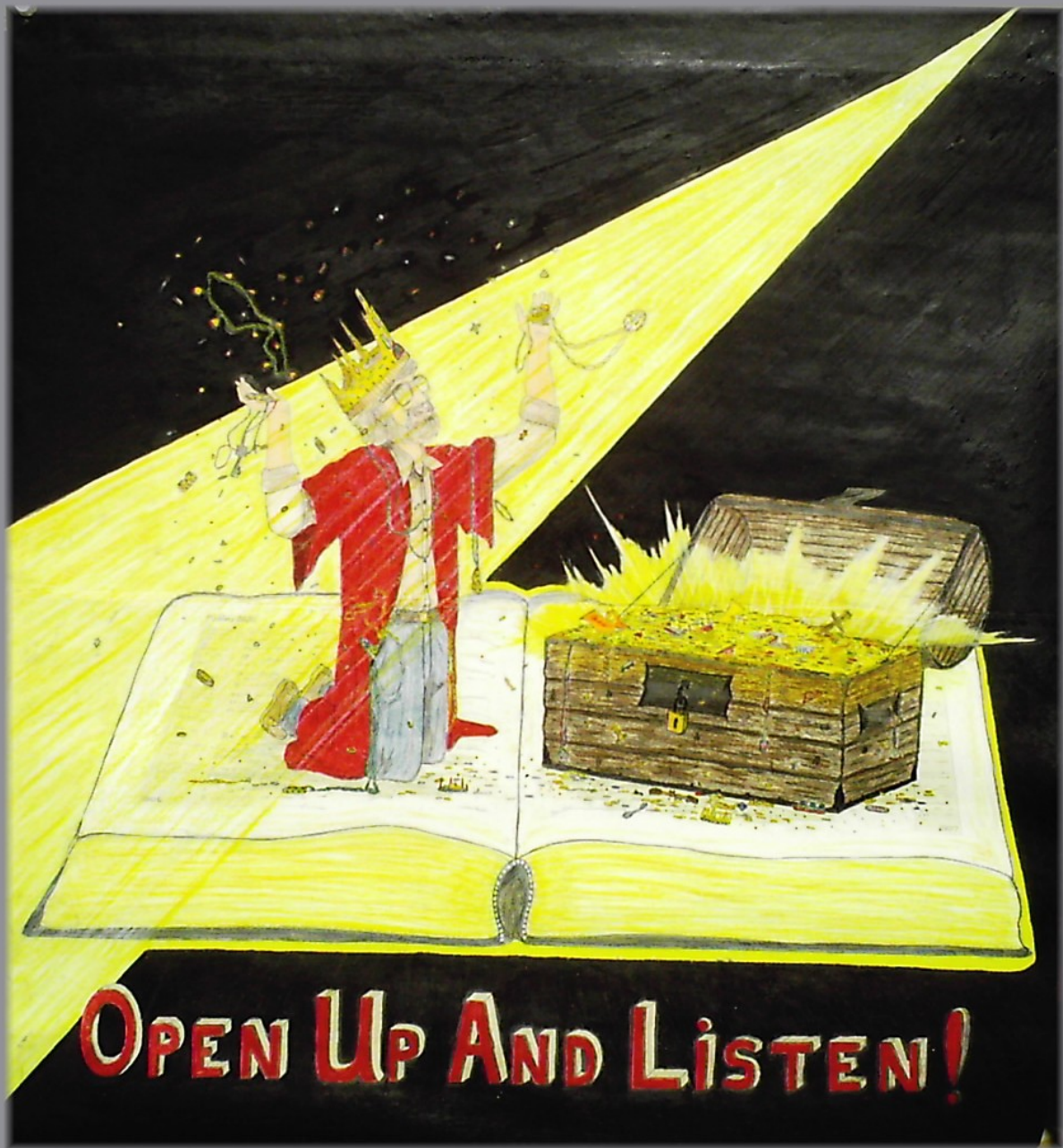




The Treasure Chest and the Bible

Explanation of the Picture

Robin Calamaio - Copyright 2002 - Edit 2019

To the Song "Open Up and Listen"

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1. The Chest - Pretend the chest is closed and let's examine it for a moment. That old chest

isn't worth a thing. The leather handles are old and rotten, the wood is dry and brittle, and the face plate, hinges, and corners are made of old pig iron. You know, a dusty old cracked-covered family Bible that is never opened is pretty much worthless. That unopened Bible is similar to this old chest if left unopened. Why? Because the treasure is inside. You must open them to get to the treasure!

2. The Keys - Now, as we try to open the chest, we find it has a lock. But, like all locks, there is a key that will open it. To try to get into the chest any other way may damage the contents. Many have "damaged" the contents of the Bible by either forcing the wrong keys into the lock or by trying to get into its treasures by some other way (Jn 10:1). The keys of pride, unbelief, intellectual arrogance, presumption, assumption and impure motives have "damaged" the contents of the Bible. But, of course, the Bible has not *actually* been damaged. "*It is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one stroke of a letter of the Law (or any of God's Word) to fail*" (Lk 16:17). "*Forever, O Lord, Thy word stands firm in heaven*" (Ps 119:89). Unfortunately, trusting souls who have listened to individuals who *claim* to have legally gotten into the treasure chest (and yet have no key in hand) have often been damaged by those who have forcefully opened this chest. That is why God admonishes each person to "*examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good*" (1Thes 5:21).

So, what is the key that unlocks the treasure chest? It is the key of faith. God does not ask anyone to *blindly* receive His word as the truth. The word translated "faith" is part of a family of words that carries the connotation of "persuasion." God challenges us to bring forward our strong arguments (Isa 41:21). He challenges us to present our case before Him (Isa 43:26). He is not intimidated by our views, opinions, arguments, intellect or evidences! He welcomes any of us to stand "toe to Toe" with Him - and see how we fare. The power of our "great intellect" is not something from which He runs. He challenges *us* to examine His word with utmost diligence to see if what He says is true. Jesus said that if any man is willing to do God's will, he will know of the teaching, whether it is "*out of God*" - or not (Jn 7:17). God will convince us of the truth of His word if we have the courage to honestly seek out this matter. He is the King of persuasion.

Faith defined (the key that opens the treasure chest) is, "*the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen*" (Heb 11:1). Several steps are required if one is to gain assurance, or conviction, about something - especially if the matter is not seen. First, information must be collected. Second, that information must be investigated and reflected upon. And finally, that study must *win over* the investigator. The material must be powerful enough to persuade the investigator. Concerning my investigation of the Bible, I found an interesting aspect about it. No one can actually *prove* the Bible is false in its claims and statements. No one can disprove the Creation Account. At most, all a person can say is, "*I don't believe it.*" You were not there, and what if He decided to create it with *an appearance of age* - maybe to test you and see if you would chose scientific "evidences" over His statements? Similarly, Biblical miracles can not be disproved. How do you know that the Red Sea was not parted (Ex 14:21)? How do you know that an iron axe head did not float to the surface (2Ki 6:1-6)? Miracles never claim to be logical, or to submit themselves to the natural laws of this order. The very fact these events *defy* the natural order of things is the whole point. That is

what makes ... a miracle! They are demonstrations that the One who created all our natural laws is not Himself limited by them. He can suspend any of them at any time - hence, a miracle! In a similar vein, no one can say the promises of the Bible are untrue. Can you prove that eternal life in Jesus Christ is a false claim? Can you prove that promises of an immortal body in a new heaven and earth is a lie? All one can say is, "*I don't believe it.*" In a total consistency of information, the Bible itself divides all of humanity into two groups - believers and unbelievers. Race, gender, culture - all of these are non issues. Faith is the key that opens the treasure chest.

You will notice there are several keys lying in front of the treasure chest. When a person begins seeking for the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, he/she usually tries several keys in an attempt to get to those treasures. Maybe, like Martin Luther, one tries all the keys of Roman Catholicism - but to no avail. Maybe one tries keys of meditation, or mysticism, or various philosophic keys. Maybe even scientism - convinced science will one day explain everything. But those keys can not open the treasure chest. I tried all kinds of keys in my varied attempts at finding the meaning and point of life. But once I found the right one, I immediately dropped all the worthless keys. And there is no point or need or desire to ever pick them up again. Whatever those keys might open ... cannot rival what is in this treasure chest.

If, with one hand, a person is waving a fancy looking key in your face, you need to see if they have any treasure in their other hand. "*You will know them by their fruits*" (Mt 7:20).

3. The Treasures - This treasure chest has a great variety of valuables. There is gold, silver, diamonds, rubies, emeralds - and in many cases these valuables have been combined with others to make some fantastic jewelry. There are necklaces of gold with costly ornaments attached. There are gold rings studded with diamonds. And there are crowns embedded with sapphires, pearls, and various inlays. What variety! The treasures range from the single silver coin to a diadem of diamonds, gold, and rubies. But whether simple or complex, these all have one important thing in common - *they are all treasure!* So, too, the Bible has some passages that are diamond studded crowns while others, by comparison, are simple silver coins. But all is treasure! Similarly, in the body of Christ, some of the saints have been gifted with ten talents, while others have one - yet each earthen vessels is endowed *with divine treasure!* **One** talent of God is immeasurably valuable. In fact, those saints (or those simple Bible passages) which *seem* less valuable are the most necessary. And each is more valuable than the most powerful thing the world can offer. Don't carelessly misplace, displace, or lose any of these treasures - and take heed that you don't think something (or someone) is just a common, simple silver coin. Treasure is treasure! May God give you eyes to see it and a brain to know it when you see it! Our God is a God of tremendous variety and hidden surprises; and He deals only in treasure.

4. Me - First of all, the emphasis is hopefully not one of egotism. The main point is that each person, for himself or herself, must open up that treasure chest. No one can open that chest for another. Oh, how I long to open it for my daughters! I would give anything to open it for many in my family. And there are hundreds - and thousands - of people I have come in contact with - for whom I would open that chest. But I can't. So please, ... place yourself in front of that chest (I had to get on my knees) - search for the right key - and unlock it. Just do it. Ask God to help

you find the key if you are having trouble. He will not turn away a sincere request for help.

Also note that the purpose of the Bible's treasures is not to fill our eyes with the jewels but to raise our eyes to the Author of the jewels. That's an extremely important point. And finally, notice that He brings "*forth His people with joy, His chosen ones with a joyful shout!*" (Ps 105:43). The joy gained is inexpressible - literally, "*not able to speak out*" (1Pet 1:8). It is beyond words.

I will now share with you a secret. If you are looking for the *treasures of wisdom* or the *treasures of knowledge* in the matters of life - go ahead and look wherever you want. But here is the secret. The Bible states there is One place where wisdom can be found and where knowledge is located. They are all hidden in God's mystery - in Jesus Christ "*in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*" (Col 2:2,3). What a stupendous claim. That is either true ... or a lie.

Incidentally, the crown which I have drawn here *is the wrong kind of crown*. The one pictured is a diadem. I have since discovered that the crowns for believers are not diadems, *but wreaths*. The word for a diadem, or kingly crown, is found only three times in the New Testament. Those who have the diadems are the seven heads of the red dragon (Rev 12:3) and the ten horns of the beast (Rev 13:1). But these will be found to be just costume jewelry. However, there are many diadems (real ones) on the head of the "*King of Kings and Lord of Lords*" (Rev 19:12). Keep learning son.

5. The Shaft of Light - God dwells in "*unapproachable light*" (1Tim 6:16). He has no beginning and He has no end. Jesus declared Himself to be "*the light of the world*" (Jn 8:12). Part of what He meant is that He is the *only* source of true spiritual information. The world system is void of accurate material on the subject of God - His character, ways, and will. Thus, the world is in darkness. The light of God gives life, enlightens the mind and rejoices the heart. His light gives us direction in life and also informs us of the great unseens of our existence - unseens like eternal judgment, heaven, hell, angelic beings, etc. Plus, His light assists us in seeing His unseen hand as He teaches us of His priorities, agenda, and works in this world.

6. The Red Letters - The opportunity for us to Open Up and Listen to God comes to us through the blood of the Son of God. If the blood of Jesus was not available to us, there would be no foundation upon which we could come to God for favorable exchanges. The blood of Christ makes it possible for us to have peaceful, profitable, life-giving exchanges with God. Apart from Christ, one stands in the disfavor of God. And, because of unforgiven sin, the place of peace does not exist between a person and God. Incidentally, I have a red robe on because I am very aware of the fact that I need the blood of Christ credited to me if I am to have *any* interaction with God. I still sin. I approach God only in the blood of Jesus and in His righteousness. The name of Robin will get me nowhere. The name of Jesus puts me before the throne of God. Forget your name, too! "*If any one thinks he is something, being nothing, he deceives himself*" (Gal 6:3). That's just the way it is.

7. The Black Background - Apart from God, all is darkness That is not to say that the

Bible is the *only* place of *any* truth. God is a lot bigger than just His book. I would venture to guess (and this is only a wild guess) that if every word you ever said was written down, you probably would have many volumes the same length as the Bible ... maybe a hundred times as much! Well, how much more could our Eternal Creator say? The Bible is really just a small, small work of His. Yet, that Book has the ability to challenge the most intellectual mind the human race can produce - for a lifetime. And that mind would come to the end of life having only scratched the surface of the available insight and information in the Bible. Even God's shallow depths are inexhaustible. But one thing is for sure - apart from God, there is no truth. Apart from God, all is darkness. And anything that is true, whether in the natural or metaphysical realm, is ultimately grounded in God. That is why the shaft of light pictured here extends on both sides of the Bible. All truth is God's possession and creation. He is the Creator of truth. I want in.

To compare all your treasures to gold,
Profanes them - this, I do know.
But, we're just so darn dull,
So thick is our skull,
This helps to explain what we hold.

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Here's the Commentary on the Song: https://youtu.be/_XSw86ZQ1rl

Here's the video on this Drawing Explanation: <https://youtu.be/j9bOq9rSdnw>